

VoluNteer!

ServeNebraskaWeek

www.serve.nebraska.gov

ServeNebraska Week of Service April 22-28, 2013 2013 Toolkit



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ServeNebraska Week of Service: April 22-28, 2013

THINGS TO KNOW

ServeNebraska is excited to offer this adaptable toolkit that is also available online at www.serve.nebraska.gov. In this toolkit, you'll find essential messages and resources needed to effectively encourage and acknowledge volunteer participation, project ideas, and volunteer resources during ServeNebraska Week of Service 2013.

During this signature week, all Nebraskans are being called on to demonstrate the power of service in our state. **Governor Dave Heineman and First Lady Sally Ganem are serving as honorary champions for the Week of Service.** The ServeNebraska Week of Service will allow Nebraskans to show their volunteer spirit in their communities. The week-long effort will provide Nebraskans with flexibility as to when they volunteer and for how long. By giving your time whether it's an hour, a day, or a week – no amount is too big or too small. This is an opportunity for individuals, families, groups, nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, businesses and government entities to come together to serve and promote volunteer commitment in their communities.

Volunteer service has the power to impact serious community issues in a cost-effective and proven way. In 2011, according to the Volunteering in America report, Nebraskans donated 49.3 million hours of their time to nonprofit organizations. This service was estimated to be worth \$1.2 million. People volunteer for all kinds of reasons. The easiest way to get involved is simply finding a need in your community that you're passionate about. Need help identifying your reason to volunteer? Here are a few ideas:

- Help others
- Make a difference
- Find purpose
- Connect with your community
- Feel involved
- Contribute to a cause that you care about
- Use your skills in a productive way
- Develop new skills
- Meet new people, make new friends
- Strengthen your resume
- Feel better about yourself

ServeNebraska mobilizes Nebraskans to build a culture of service in their communities through volunteering, collaboration and national service programs. In 2013, ServeNebraska is granting more than \$2 million in federal funds for national service and volunteer programs and activities that benefit local communities. ServeNebraska is funding 13 AmeriCorps programs across the state which engages a total of 250 AmeriCorps members providing community service. The quarterly Governor's Points of Light Awards and the annual First Lady's Outstanding Community Service Awards are also premier programs of ServeNebraska. To learn more about ServeNebraska visit www.serve.nebraska.gov.

GETTING INVOLVED

Step 1: Get Your Community Involved

- Provide opportunities for members of your community to participate in projects as individuals or as a group. During ServeNebraska Week of Service engage volunteers and encourage them to get involved. Activities for this statewide initiative can include revitalizing community centers, rehabilitating parks, improving low-income homes, creating community art projects, mentoring, serving meals, developing community gardens and much more.

Step 2: Register

- To register your individual or group volunteer service project for ServeNebraska Week of Service, visit www.serve.nebraska.gov and click on the Week of Service logo.

Step 3: Share Your Stories

- Please make note of the highlights of your volunteer project story and take photos of the event. Following ServeNebraska Week of Service a follow-up survey will be sent requesting stories and photos of the volunteer projects that took place in Nebraska communities.
- Utilize the toolkit marketing resources to publicize the Week of Service volunteer activities and volunteers in newsletters, local newspapers, local media and social media.

Step 4: Recognize and Thank Volunteers

- Volunteers are our state's unsung heroes. While they may not seek it, they deserve recognition for their efforts.
- Celebrate and recognize the efforts of volunteers that participated in ServeNebraska Week of Service. For a group or individual that has done an outstanding service effort you can submit a nomination on their behalf for a quarterly *Governor's Points of Light Award* or annual *First Lady's Outstanding Community Service Award*. To learn more visit: www.serve.nebraska.gov/awards/awards.htm.
- Send thank you letters to donors, sponsors, volunteers, speakers, and others who have contributed to your project and include a picture of the project at work.



ServeNebraska Week of Service Honorary Champions Governor Dave Heineman & First Lady Sally Ganem

"The Good Life we enjoy and the high national volunteerism ranking we honor will only continue if the ethic of service and commitment to community we all have is continued in future generations of Nebraskans," First Lady Sally Ganem.

Governor Dave Heineman, First Lady Sally Ganem
& Snickers

MARKETING RESOURCES

The following marketing resources and ServeNebraska Week of Service brand logo have been created to help you generate awareness and excitement regarding your volunteer service projects.

ServeNebraska Week of Service Logo

- To obtain the ServeNebraska Week of Service Logo, visit www.serve.nebraska.gov and click on the Week of Service logo. Utilize the logo for a consistent message to boost involvement and awareness of service and volunteerism. Be sure to download the logo sticker page so all of your volunteers wear the “Week of Service” sticker while participating in your volunteer project.



Key Messages

- ServeNebraska Week of Service, April 22-28, encourages families, students, congregations, employees, and individuals of all ages and backgrounds to volunteer their time in giving back to their communities. The Week of Service provides Nebraskans with an opportunity to join a statewide effort.
- Nebraskans are quick to volunteer. Our state ranks in the top 10 in volunteerism among the 50 states and Washington, D.C.
- The beneficiaries of the ServeNebraska Week of Service will be those served by the organizations where our state’s volunteers direct their efforts. A goal for the Week of Service is to have volunteers participate in all 93 counties.
- ServeNebraska is a resource for volunteerism in Nebraska. ServeNebraska is the Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission, coordinates AmeriCorps programs, and supports community involvement by and for all Nebraskans.

Template Media Advisory (for group and individual projects)

Media advisories alert media to event details and specific coverage opportunities. Advisories are typically sent 2-5 days in advance of your event to reporters, news desks and photo desks.

[Please customize the below media advisory as needed and distribute to local media in your community to build awareness and participation for your event.]

[add your organization logo]

MEDIA ALERT FOR SERVENEBRASKA WEEK OF SERVICE

SAMPLE HEADLINE: Calling On Volunteers for ServeNebraska Week of Service

SAMPLE SUBHEAD: More than 200 Volunteers Expected to Gather in Macon
Park for Clean Up Efforts

Contact: [insert contact name, your organization's phone and e-mail]

WHO: [list names of dignitaries attending your event]

WHAT: [briefly describe event - sample... Approximately 200 volunteers from surrounding neighborhoods, communities, including local dignitaries, teen service leaders, elementary school children and adults, will gather in Macon Park to help clean up the park in preparation for spring and summer activities that take place in the park.]

WHERE: [event address]

WHEN: [event time and date]

WHY: ServeNebraska Week of Service is about inspiring, recognizing and encouraging Nebraskans to seek out imaginative ways to engage in their communities. Volunteerism spans all ages. Anyone can volunteer! It's about working together, to meet our community's needs and accomplish our goals.

Sponsored by ServeNebraska—The Week of Service is newly established to promote volunteerism and service across the state. The week-long effort will provide Nebraskans with flexibility as to when they volunteer and for how long. A goal for the Week of Service is to have volunteers participate in all 93 counties, with hundreds of volunteer projects and special events scheduled throughout the week. ServeNebraska encourages participants to form lasting relationships with the organizations for which they volunteer during the Week of Service.

For more information regarding ServeNebraska Week of Service, please visit:

www.serve.nebraska.gov.

[INSERT ORGANIZATION CONTACT INFORMATION HERE (NAME, PHONE, EMAIL, WEBSITE)]

Template Press Release *(General Project Announcement Release)*

To be sent in advance of your project, to let journalists know it's happening. Send to journalists and media outlets 3-8 weeks in advance.

[Please customize the below press release as needed and distribute to your local media to highlight your volunteer project and the impact of service to meet community needs.]

SAMPLE HEADLINE:

[ORGANIZATION NAME] Nebraskans Encouraged to Join Statewide Volunteering Initiative

SAMPLE SUBHEAD:

Calling on Volunteers for ServeNebraska Week of Service

[CITY/STATE, MONTH DAY, 2013 – ORGANIZATION NAME, ORGANIZATION

DESCRIPTION], Nebraskans from Cass County to Banner, and everywhere in between, are encouraged to join the 2013 ServeNebraska Week of Service, April 22-28. ¶“The Week of Service will provide Nebraskans with an opportunity to show their volunteer spirit while benefiting their communities’ schools, nonprofits, churches and parks,” said Jamesena Moore, chairwoman of ServeNebraska, the state’s Volunteer Service Commission. ¶“We know that Nebraskans are quick to step forward to help those in need. We know that Nebraskans work diligently to improve the quality of life in their state and communities,” Moore said, “And we know our state is a better place because its residents know the importance of volunteerism.”

[INSERT SERVENEBRASKA WEEK OF SERVICE VOLUNTEER PROJECT OVERVIEW HERE: WHAT IS TAKING PLACE? WHERE IS IT HAPPENING? WHO IS PARTICIPATING? WHAT IS THE IMPACT?]

[“INSERT ORGANIZATIONAL QUOTE HERE RE: SERVENEBRASKA WEEK OF SERVICE VOLUNTEER SERVICE PROJECT AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO THE COMMUNITY DURING THE WEEK OF SERVICE.” INSERT PROGRAM DETAILS HERE: HOW CAN INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS LEARN MORE OR GET INVOLVED.]

¶According to the recent Volunteering in America Report, Nebraska ranks in the top 10 in volunteerism among the 50 states and Washington, D.C. In 2011, 36.7 percent of Nebraska residents volunteered. They served a total of 49.3 million hours of service worth \$1.2 billion. ¶The Week of Service is a first for ServeNebraska and its efforts to promote volunteerism in the state. The week-long effort will provide Nebraskans with flexibility as to when they volunteer and for how long. ServeNebraska has developed a toolkit to assist those who wish to participate. ServeNebraska has volunteer ambassadors in all 93 counties who will suggest opportunities for volunteering. ¶First Lady Sally Ganem, a ServeNebraska volunteer commissioner, and her husband, Governor Dave Heineman, are serving as honorary champions for the Week of Service. ¶Nebraskans may register for the Week of Service and access the toolkit by visiting www.serve.nebraska.gov. Individuals or groups may participate. Following the Week of Service, ServeNebraska will release data on the scope of participation. ¶ServeNebraska’s mission is to mobilize Nebraskans to strengthen their communities through volunteering, collaboration and national service programs.

[About INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME, INSERT ORGANIZATION BOILERPLATE INFORMATION]

Contact: ADD ORGANIZATION CONTACT HERE (NAME, PHONE, EMAIL, WEBSITE)

Post-Event Release

A press release to be sent 24-72 hours after your volunteer service project, along with pictures, to let journalists know what you've achieved.

Public Relations Tips

Outlined below are tips for approaching your local media outlets to help you secure coverage for our volunteer service project during ServeNebraska Week of Service:

- Try to take advantage of current news or trends, if appropriate or helpful. If you can pitch Week of Service activities to a reporter in the context of a larger news trend you are seeing in your local market, you will increase your chances of coverage by making the pitch seem less commercial. However, do not ever link ServeNebraska Week of Service to stories that might be political in nature, polarizing or overly controversial. The purpose of ServeNebraska Week of Service is to promote volunteerism and service.
- To enhance your relationship with a reporter, you can offer to provide him or her with access to your organization or group and the people you serve before the project begins. This will allow them to learn about what went into planning the project itself, covering it from the perspective of a participant rather than as a separate third party.
- For television, call the station and ask which producer covers stories related to local charitable organizations and volunteer service events. Ask how you might be included in their coverage. For example, maybe they are open to having an organizational representative on their show to discuss local service projects.

Social Media Tips

Use social media like Facebook, Twitter, blogs and YouTube to craft your own content, tell your own story, and potentially reach wide audiences without using the news media as an intermediary. Plus, you can get creative and show off photos and videos of your good work!

You can also use social media to raise awareness about your project issue, recruit volunteers, connect with likeminded people and organizations, and gain volunteer support.

Facebook

- Use Facebook to inform the community, colleagues, friends and family about your ServeNebraska Week of Service volunteer project progress and needs, and to recruit volunteers.
- Post statuses about your project on a personal page to tell Facebook friends why this volunteer service project is important to you, the community and how it affects them
- Like the ServeNebraska page! <http://www.facebook.com/serve-nebraska>

Twitter

- Use Twitter to engage in online conversations about your ServeNebraska Week of Service volunteer service project.
- Share the details of your project with your followers. Attach pictures to your tweets.
- Follow us at <http://twitter.com/serve-ne>
- The hashtag for ServeNebraska Week of Service 2013 is #ServeNEWeek13.

Blog

- Write a post about why ServeNebraska Week of Service project is important to you and your volunteers.
- Include a profile of the person you are recognizing for your readers. How did their service change the community?
- Send a link to your blog post to kim.hall@nebraska.gov and we'll link to it from www.serve-nebraska.gov.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Proclamation Request Letter

[Recipient Name]
[Address]
[City, State, Zip Code]

Dear [Mayor/Other Elected Official name]:

As we approach the first-ever ServeNebraska Week of Service, April 22-28, we ask you to honor [city] volunteers who tirelessly share their time and talent with those in need. Your support can challenge and encourage the people you represent to commit to sustained and future volunteer service. [Insert a thank you for past participation, if relevant].

ServeNebraska Week of Service is about inspiring, recognizing and encouraging Nebraskans to seek out imaginative ways to engage in their community. It's about meeting our needs, not as isolated individuals, but as members of a community with all of us working together.

Enclosed you will find a sample proclamation and more information about ServeNebraska Week of Service. The Week of Service will provide Nebraskans with an opportunity to show their volunteer spirit while benefiting their communities' schools, nonprofits, churches, parks and more. This special week is led by honorary champions, Governor Dave Heineman and First Lady Sally Ganem to support all Nebraskans in their volunteer efforts in their communities.

[Name of your organization] plans to recognize the volunteers in [name of your city] by [insert SHORT description of your planned volunteer projects]. We invite you to join our volunteer event at [insert information about your event].

If you have any questions, please call [local contact]. We would be honored to have you participate and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

[your name]
[title, organization's name]

Sample Proclamation

WHEREAS, the entire state can inspire, equip and mobilize people to take action that changes the world; and

WHEREAS, volunteers can connect with local community service opportunities through hundreds of community service organizations like ServeNebraska; and

WHEREAS, individuals and communities are at the center of social change, discovering their power to make a difference; and

WHEREAS, during this week across Nebraska, service projects will be performed and volunteers recognized for their commitment to service; and

WHEREAS, the giving of oneself in service to another empowers the giver and the recipient; and

WHEREAS, experience teaches us that government by itself cannot solve all of our nation's social problems; and

WHEREAS, our state's volunteer force of over 500,000 is a great treasure; and

WHEREAS, volunteers are vital to our future as a caring and productive nation; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, [name/title] do hereby proclaim

April 22-28, 2013
ServeNebraska Week of Service

In [city], and urge my fellow citizens to volunteer in their respective communities. By volunteering and recognizing those who serve, we can replace disconnection with understanding and compassion.

Signed this [DATE] day of [MONTH], 2013



SERVENEBRASKA MISSION

Mobilizing Nebraskans to strengthen their communities through volunteering, collaboration, and national service programs.



WEEK OF SERVICE VISION

Engage Nebraskans in volunteerism through a week of service that reaches across the state, every county, every community, every person.

NATIONAL SERVICE PARTNERS



Foster Grandparents
Share Today. Shape Tomorrow.

RSVP
Lead With Experience

Senior Companions
Make Independence a Reality



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